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U.K. Closer to Removing Climate Change from National Curriculum

Earlier this year, Education Secretary Michael Gove called for a review of the nationwide standardized curricula in core subjects. Upon announcing the review, Gove promised to reverse the "profound mistakes" made by the previous government and to restore "academic rigour" to the classroom.

Under the previous Labour government, the national standardized science curriculum had swollen to 500 pages and given precedence to "scientific issues" over the basic and undisputed science principles.

Following up on Secretary Gove's proposal, Tim Oates, the head government advisor reviewing educational plans, has completed a study of the curriculum currently being taught to English children ages five to 16. The results of his review and his recommendations will be published later this year, but Oates has previewed the findings by telling reporters that he believes that individual schools should determine their own approach to subjects related to how "scientific processes" affect their lives.

In an interview with the British daily *The Guardian*, Oates further explained the purpose behind the soon-to-be-released study of the national curriculum. Expressing a need for schools to "get back to the basics," Oates commented, "We have believed that we need to keep the national curriculum up to date with topical issues, but oxidation and gravity don't date." "[We're] taking it back to the core stuff," he added.

Given the revelations made in the wake of "Climategate," there is good, scientific support for the government of Prime Minister David Cameron to rein in the overzealous climate-change cabal that has for years imposed its disproved sensibilities on the minds of British youth.

The Climategate scandal, which first exploded at East Anglia University in Norwich, England, was succinctly summarized by *The New American*'s Bill Jasper in an article published late last year:

> In late 2009, an unknown source released thousands of e-mail communications of some of the top names in global-warming alarmism, showing evidence of fraud and deception: deleting and withholding of inconvenient and contradictory evidence; efforts to get colleagues with whom they disagree fired and to prevent them from being published; and much more. Many of these scientists — Michael Mann, Phil Jones, James Hansen, Kevin Trenberth, Keith Briffa, Tom Wigley, et al. — are

> the "experts" who have provided research for the UN's IPCC reports that are driving the AGW [manmade or Anthropogenic Global Warming] campaign. Michael Mann's infamous "hockey stick" temperature graph, which figures prominently in Al Gore's movie and the IPCC reports, is a prime example. It shows a relatively straight shaft extending from 1000 A.D. to 1900, when a blade turns sharply upward, suggesting that warming in the 20th century was "unprecedented," and caused by man's activities.
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> This widely accepted "evidence" of AGW has been proven to be a colossal sham. □□"I view Climategate as science fraud, pure and simple," says Princeton physics professor Robert Austin. Harold Lewis, emeritus professor of physics at the University of California, Santa Barbara, and a member of the American Physical Society for 67 years, says Climategate is further proof that "the global warming scam … is the greatest and most successful pseudoscientific fraud I have seen in my long life as a physicist." □□"The climate-change establishment has tried to eliminate any who dare question the science," Princeton physics professor William Happer said in testimony before a congressional committee. "This was made very clear in the Climategate Letters, which reveal the blacklisting of research that strays from the party line with the aid of hostile peer reviewers and helpful editors, and threats to any journal that did not cooperate — in some cases leading to the removal of editors." Clive Crook, senior editor for *The Atlantic*, said of Climategate: "The stink of intellectual corruption is overpowering."

According the article in *The Guardian*, "climate change has featured in the national curriculum since 1995. In 2007, the topics 'cultural understanding of science' and 'applications and implications of science' were added to the curriculum for 11- to-14-year-olds."

Such a winnowing of settled science fact from speculated science fiction in the national curriculum has detractors. One official associated with a climate-change institute based at the London School of Economics worries that the elimination of the requirement to teach climate change in school may result in the complete disappearance of the subject from school, especially in classrooms led by teachers skeptical of global warming.

"This would not be in the best interest of pupils. It would be like a creationist teacher not teaching about evolution," the official claimed.

The analogy breaks down, as do most of the faulty ones, by a misidentification of the parallels. There is no appeal to faith in the climate-change controversy, as there is in the creation versus evolution debate. There are accepted principles of science that are beyond debate (gravity, for example), the teaching of which would conflict with the faith of only a very few.

However, when a teacher presumes to foist a contrivance such as climate change on unsuspecting children, he exceeds the scope of his authority and confuses the noble mission of teaching with the ignoble mission of indoctrination.

For the interest of readers, we include an overview of the current required teaching on climate change in the United Kingdom as provided by *The Guardian:*

> Age 5-11: Pupils should be taught to care for the environment as part of a topic on life processes and living things.
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> Age 11-14: Pupils should be taught how human activity and natural processes can lead to changes in the environment and about ways in which living things and the environment need to be protected. Teachers are encouraged to examine issues such as the finite resources available to us,

waste reduction, recycling, renewable energy and environmental pollution.

Pupils demonstrate exceptional performance if they can "describe and explain the importance of a wide range of applications and implications of science in familiar and unfamiliar contexts, such as addressing problems arising from global climate change."

Age 14-16: Pupils should learn that the surface and the atmosphere of the earth have changed since the earth's origin, and are changing at present. They should also study how the effects of human activity on the environment can be assessed, using living and non-living indicators. Under "applications and implications of science", pupils should be taught to "consider how and why decisions about science and technology are made, including those that raise ethical issues, and about the social, economic and environmental effects of such decisions."

The full scope of the review includes a suggested overhaul of the curricula of 12 subjects, including math, science, art, and English.